

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
DEPARTMENT OF FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2752
TO BE ANSWERED ON 17TH MARCH, 2026

UNIVERSALISATION OF FORTIFIED RICE

2752 **SMT. REKHA SHARMA:**

Will the Minister of *Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution* be pleased to state:

- (a): the rationale behind universalisation of fortified rice under Government food-based schemes;
- (b): the nutrients added in fortified rice and their expected health benefits;
- (c): whether fortified rice is being supplied across all districts under PMGKAY and other schemes; and
- (d): the duration for which the supply of fortified Rice has been approved?

A N S W E R
MINISTER OF STATE FOR MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS,
FOOD & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
(SHRIMATI NIMUBEN JAYANTIBHAI BAMBHANIYA)

(a): Fortification is a globally recognized practice, and India follows guidelines aligned with the World Health Organization (WHO). According to WHO's 2018 recommendations, rice fortification with iron is recommended in countries where rice is a staple food. In India, with 65% of its population consuming rice daily, iron-fortified rice is particularly relevant. Moreover, rice has the highest offtake in government food safety net programs, providing a unique opportunity to reach approximately 80 crore people, including women and children, efficiently.

Fortification of rice has been adopted as a complementary and mid term strategy to address iron deficiency anaemia along with other strategies under Anaemia Mukht Bharat initiative. In order to achieve the uniform impact of the initiative among the targeted population, the Government of India considered the supply of fortified rice in all central food safety net schemes in a phased manner from FY 2021-22 covering all schemes by March 2024. Since March 2024, only fortified rice is being supplied in all central food safety net programs.

(b): Fortified rice is enriched with three critical micronutrients – Iron, folic acid and Vitamin B12 and is expected to address the challenge of anaemia.

(c): Yes, Fortified rice is being supplied in all districts under PMGKAY except wheat consuming states i.e. Punjab, Haryana, and Rajasthan and 100% Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) UTs i.e. Chandigarh and Puducherry.

(d): The Government of India had approved the continuation of the universal supply of fortified rice under all central government schemes in its present form until December 2028.
